

Our weekly community profile

In Gillett, you find the right values

Laid-back life appealing here

By Gary Dodge

Press-Gazette

GILLETT — Warren and Karen Eiseth came to this Oconto County community in 1951 hoping teaching jobs would be a stepping stone to further their careers.

The Eiseths however, stayed because Gillett provided the atmosphere where they wanted to raise a family.

That same environment was discovered 4½ years ago by Tom and Kaye Lietz when they moved here from Milwaukee.

Both couples found a friendly community with the right values and work ethics.

The Eiseths found a community that focused itself on its school.

"We discovered the people in this community have always been for education," said Warren Eiseth, 64, who retired last year as school superintendent.

Karen Eiseth, 61, works as human growth and development coordinator for the Cooperative Educational Services Agency No. 8 office in Gillett.

"A school in a small town is extremely important to people," Warren Eiseth said. At one point, the Suring and Gillett school districts, eight miles apart, talked of merging but Gillett residents voted it down.

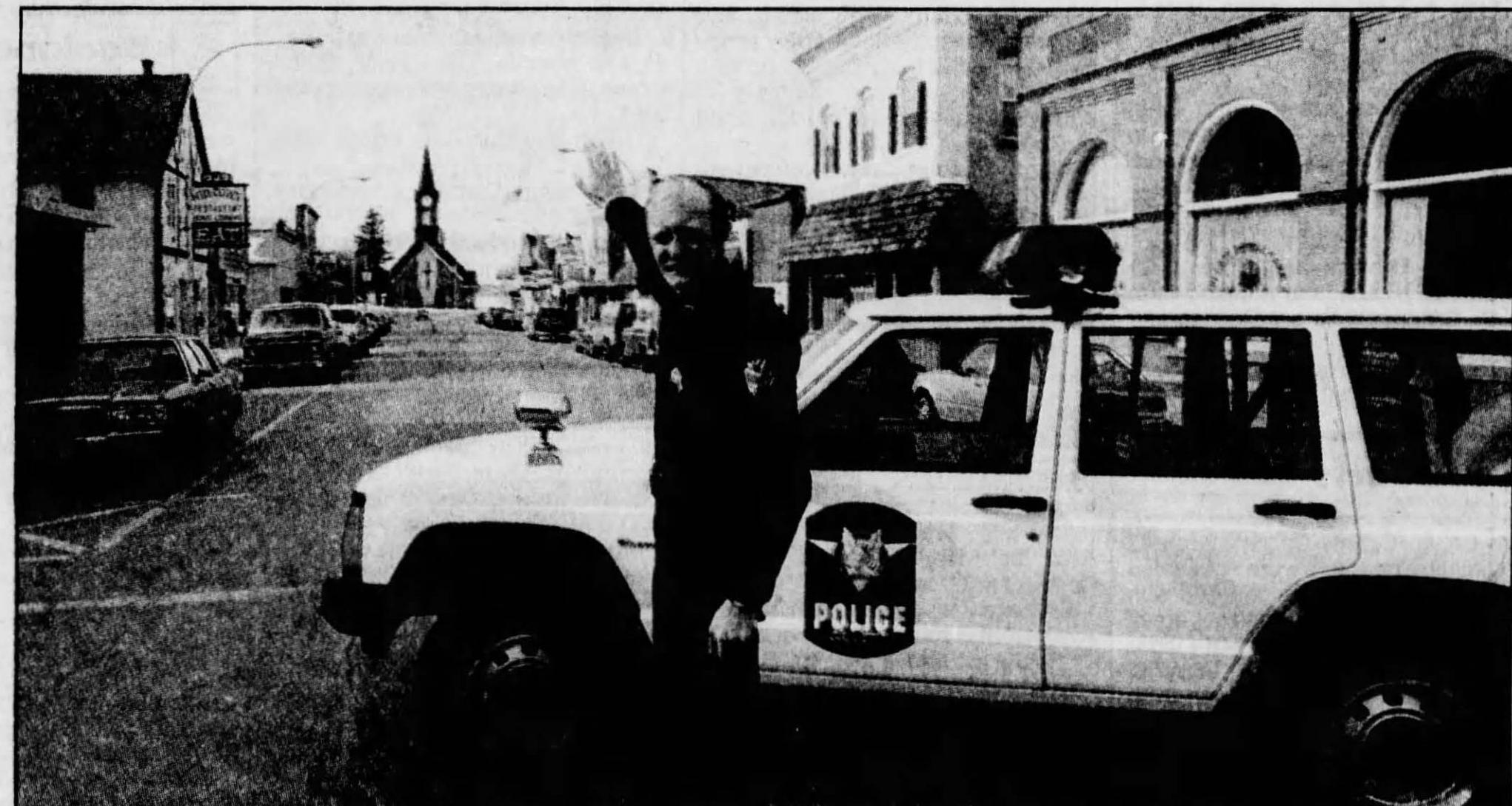
The school has 770 students and holds its own in academic and athletic competitions in the state, Superintendent Dave McCollum said.

Upon graduation, half of the students attend colleges or technical schools while others enter the local work force, McCollum, 51, said.

Warren Eiseth said he had many unsolicited job opportunities elsewhere but stayed because of opportunities to fish and hunt in the surrounding lakes and forests.

It's the small town ways that brought the Lietzes to Gillett, a community of more than 1,300 residents.

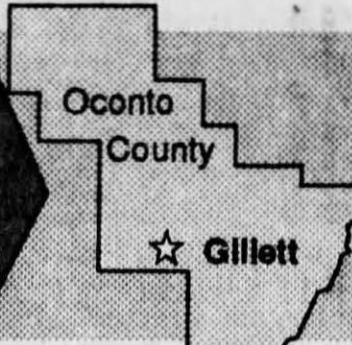
The Lietzes visited a relative's farm near Suring almost every weekend to get



Crime stopper: Police Chief William Pecha obliged the photographer and jokingly "directed" Gillett's quiet Main Street of parked cars. Pecha is part of a

police force that has three full-time officers and three part-time officers in the Oconto County community of about 1,300 people.

People & Places



The Gillett file

- Population — 1,356.
- School district student population — 770.
- Industries — Warvel Products Inc., Northport Inc., New View Inc., Friday Canning Co., Architectural Fiberglass

Inc.

- Police department — Three full-time officers and three part-time officers.
- Headquarters for the Comprehensive Educational Services Agency No. 8, serving 26 school districts in Northeastern Wisconsin.

away from Milwaukee.

"We decided one weekend if we could find a place to live in the Gillett or Suring area we would move," Kaye Lietz, 34, said.

Tom Lietz, 32, had quit his job as an emergency medical technician in Milwaukee and was a truck driver.

At first, the couple, with three children, found it hard adjusting to a new home.

"In some ways it was hard when we

first moved up here because everyone has always known everyone," said Kaye Lietz, director of the regional media center at the CESA office. "They've known families for generations but once you make friends you make really good friends, I'd say some of the best friends I've ever had."

Tom Lietz is the fire chief and quality control supervisor at Warvel Products and Kaye Lietz serves on several boards.

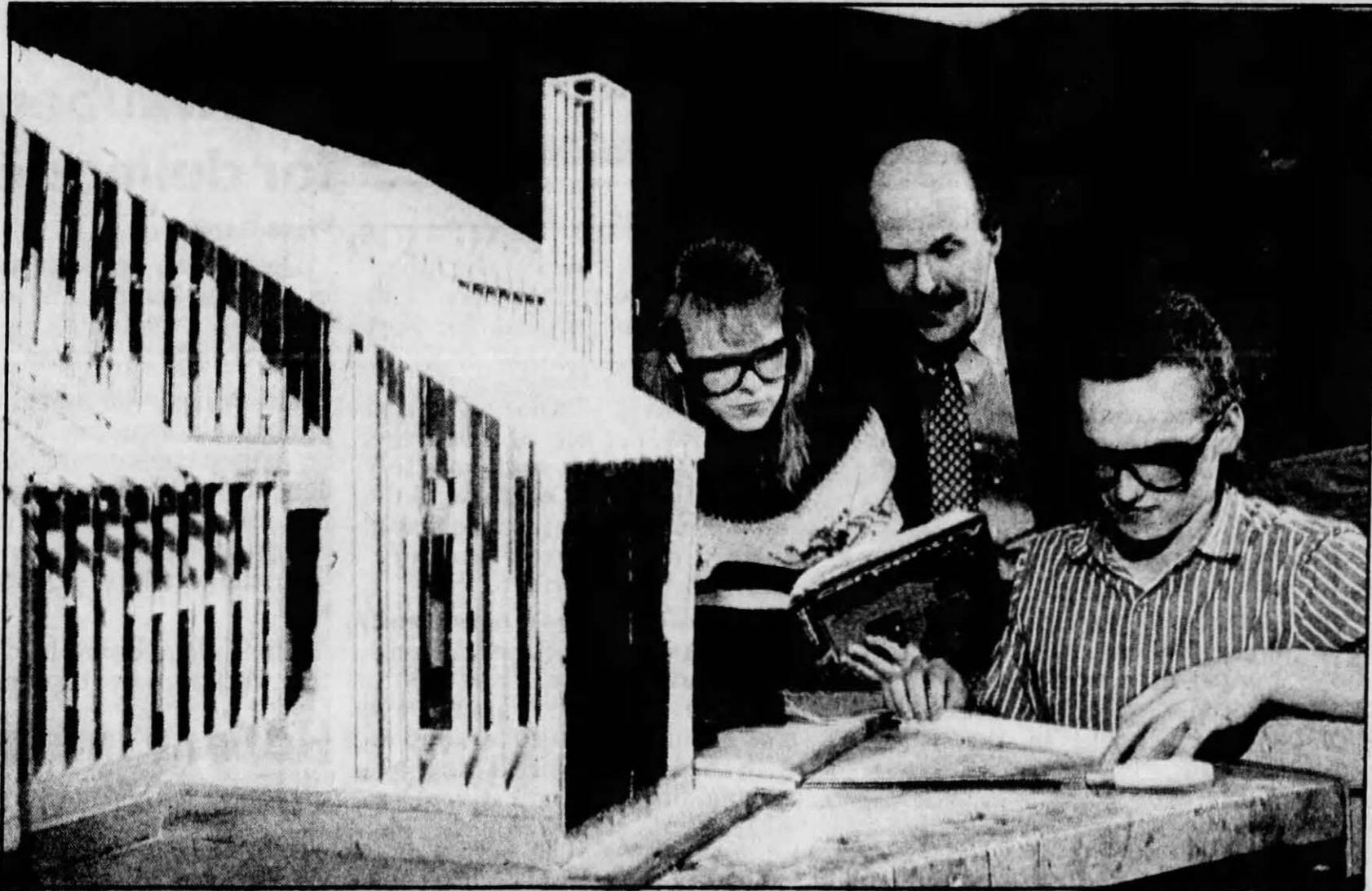
Mayor Ron Lambrecht, who grew up in Gillett, said he would not trade the laid-back life here for any other place.

It has the usual services offered by any city, including a police force with three full-time and three part-time officers.

The city also has doctors, dentists and other service-related businesses.

"Here, it's more of a small community

Please see Gillett/B-2



Future builders: School Superintendent Dave McCollum watches as students Cari Dirks, freshman, and Kyle Christensen,

senior, work on a building model in an industrial arts classroom at Gillett High School.



Mayor mechanic: Gillett Mayor Ron Lambrecht checks a vehicle at his service station in the Gillett Industrial Park.

Gillett

and you're more so bound to the natural lifestyle," said Lambrecht, 33, who owns his own service station.

"Your fast food is fast but yet still it takes time. You don't walk in and they already have it pre-made. If we want that we drive 10 miles. You wish you had some things but after awhile that tires," he said.

Lambrecht will step down as mayor after this spring's election. His older brother and city alder-

man, Ray, 35, will run unopposed for the office.

The community's industrial park attracts workers from as far away as Green Bay.

"It's not like a community of 1,200 to 1,300 surviving on one industry," Lambrecht said.

The major industries include Warvel Products Inc., Northport Inc., Architectural Fiberglass Inc., New View Inc., and Friday Canning Corp., he said.

■ **Next week:** Forest Junction in Calumet County